

chair of the West Virginia University Alumni Association's national board of directors. As chair, she has proven successful in encouraging her fellow alumni to follow her lead and expand their businesses in the Mountain State.

I thank Malene and her team for all they do to make life more meaningful for people when they are most vulnerable. As National Hospice and Palliative Care Month comes to a close, I would like to honor all of the physicians, nurses, caregivers, and volunteers who provide this valuable patient service under the Medicare Hospice Benefit. As someone who has cared for aging parents, I understand how important the work they do is and how much support and comfort it provides to patients and their families.

RECOGNIZING JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize James Whitcomb Riley Elementary School of New Castle, IN, for being named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes schools that have demonstrated a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic background. Since its inception, this program has offered the opportunity for schools in every State to gain recognition for educational accomplishments in closing the achievement gaps among students.

Recognized as an "A" school 11 of the past 12 years, James Whitcomb Riley Elementary has shown its outstanding commitment to high-quality education. Through its core curriculum and extracurricular activities, faculty at Riley work to ensure that each child is receiving the best possible educational experience. As part of that effort, the school's staff communicates regularly with families and partners with community organizations to ensure that students are receiving the resources that they need. In addition, extracurricular opportunities are offered throughout the year and include Spell Bowl and Math Bowl competitions, a science fair, student council, and the National Geographic Bee. Riley students also regularly go out in the community for field trips to learn outside the classroom. Sixth-grade students take an annual trip to Washington, DC, to learn about the Federal Government in our Nation's Capital.

Riley Elementary also puts an emphasis on service and giving back through fundraisers and food drives, instilling in students the importance of a community-focused mindset. Riley students participate in the annual Westminster Food Drive each winter to donate gifts to children at local shelters and abroad. The school also partners with Riley Children's Hospital through "Spirit Week" to connect students with young patients being treated at the hospital.

Riley's students, faculty, and staff work together to ensure every child succeeds, and the faculty partners with parents to encourage family engagement and parent involvement in school-sponsored activities, including a strong parent teacher organization.

I am proud to recognize James Whitcomb Riley Elementary School's principal Nicholas John Middleton, the entire staff, the student body, and their families. The effort, dedication, and value you put into education has led not only to this prestigious recognition, but will benefit you and the New Castle community well into the future.

On behalf of the citizens of Indiana, I congratulate James Whitcomb Riley Elementary School, and I wish the students and staff continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING PLEASANT VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Pleasant View Elementary School of Zionsville, IN, for being named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes schools that have demonstrated a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic background. Since its inception, this program has offered the opportunity for schools in every State to gain recognition for educational accomplishments in closing the achievement gaps among students.

Zionsville's Pleasant View Elementary School serves over 800 students from preschool through fourth grade. In addition to the core curriculum, the school provides many different learning opportunities for students before and after school, including language enrichment, music, and robotics programs. Pleasant View Elementary seeks to tailor instruction to meet students' individual learning styles and provide hands-on learning experiences. Pleasant View prides itself on creating a nurturing and collaborative learning environment where teachers, students, and parents work together so that all students can reach their potential. Teachers are encouraged to come up with new ideas to foster student growth through research-based practices to empower students and help them develop useful life skills. At Pleasant View, teachers understand that education is not one size fits all and that each student has their own unique way to learn.

Pleasant View Elementary maintains a high standard for academic excellence, driven by the success of a rigorous curriculum, innovative instructional practices, and a highly qualified and dedicated staff. Faculty works closely with parents to ensure their children are receiving a quality education. The parent teacher organiza-

tion also creates community and campus events to further enrich students academically and socially. Pleasant View Elementary School's dedication to student achievement and positive atmosphere have been key to its success. The school's staff and families work together to teach and foster values that develop strong character and better the community.

I am proud to recognize Pleasant View Elementary School principal Stacy Smith, the entire staff, the student body, and their families. The effort, dedication, and value you put into education has led not only to this prestigious recognition, but will benefit you and the Zionsville community well into the future.

On behalf of the citizens of Indiana, I congratulate Pleasant View Elementary School, and I wish the students and staff continued success in the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTANA WHEAT AND BARLEY COMMITTEE

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to recognize and congratulate the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee on their 50th anniversary. Agriculture is Montana's No. 1 economic driver, and wheat and barley are the principal grain crops produced in Montana. Established in 1967, the committee works to promote Montana wheat and barley producers, help identify and open markets both at home and abroad, and advance research that helps with crop quality and production. The severe drought and low commodity prices that Montana farmers have faced over the course of the past year have highlighted the importance of these efforts, and I thank all the directors, members, and staff for their years of dedication. •

REMEMBERING FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize cofounder of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and member of the Capuchin Franciscan Order of Saint Joseph, Father Solanus Casey. Father Casey is the third American-born to be honored with the distinction of Blessed from the Roman Catholic Church, the final step before sainthood.

Born as Bernard Francis Casey on November 25, 1870, Father Casey was raised on a farm in Oak Grove, WI, along the banks of the Mississippi River, with his parents and 15 siblings. At an early age, Father Casey learned diligence, obedience, and piety from his parents, who honored their Irish Catholic faith above all else. At the age of 12, Father Casey attended Saint Patrick Church in Hudson, WI, and felt the call to the priesthood during the lessons for his first Holy Communion.

After working as a logger, prison guard, and streetcar operator, Father